

**Session 1a “What is Reading?”**

**1a.0 What is Reading?**

*From your own ideas, write notes to answer these questions. Discuss with your group.*

**What is reading?**

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**Why do people read?**

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**What do people read?**

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**When and where do people read?**

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**Why do some people NOT read?**

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**Do you read? What? Why?**

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.....

*Now read the following articles about reading, and discuss the questions with your group.*

### **1a.0.1. What is Reading? – Wikipedia definition**

**Reading** is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intention of constructing or deriving meaning (reading comprehension). It is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Like all language, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practices, development, and refinement.

Readers use a variety of reading strategies to assist with decoding (to translate symbols into sounds or visual representations of speech) and comprehension. Readers may use morpheme, semantics, syntax, and context clues to identify the meaning of unknown words. Readers integrate the words they have read into their existing framework of knowledge or schema (schemata theory).

Other types of reading are not speech based writing systems, such as music notation or pictograms. The common link is the interpretation of symbols to extract the meaning from the visual notations. (Wikipedia, 2011)

### **1a.0.2. What Is Reading? – An explanation**

*By: Diane Henry Leipzig*

Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. Learn how readers integrate these facets to make meaning from print.

Reading is making meaning from print. It requires that we:

- Identify the words in print – a process called word recognition
- Construct an understanding from them – a process called comprehension
- Coordinate identifying words and making meaning so that reading is automatic and accurate – an achievement called fluency

Sometimes you can make meaning from print without being able to identify all the words. Remember the last time you got a note in messy handwriting? You may have understood it, even though you couldn't decipher all the scribbles.

Sometimes you can identify words without being able to construct much meaning from them. Read the opening lines of Lewis Carroll's poem, "Jabberwocky," and you'll see what I mean.

*'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.*

Finally, sometimes you can identify words and comprehend them, but if the processes don't come together smoothly, reading will still be a laboured process. For example, try reading the following sentence:

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It isn't as if the words  
are difficult to identify or  
understand, but the spaces  
make you pause between  
words, which means your  
reading is less fluent.

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Reading in its fullest sense involves weaving together word recognition and comprehension in a fluent manner. These three processes are complex, and each is important. How complex? Here goes:-

### **To develop word recognition, children need to learn:**

- How to break apart and manipulate the sounds in words – this is **phonemic awareness**  
example: *feet* has three sounds: /f/, /i:/, and /t/
- Certain letters are used to represent certain sounds – this is the **alphabetic principle**  
example: *s* and *h* make the /ʃ/ sound
- How to apply their knowledge of letter-sound relationships to sound out words that are new to them – this is **decoding**  
example: ssssspppooooon – spoon!
- How to analyse words and spelling patterns in order to become more efficient at reading words – this is **word study**  
example: *Bookworm* has two words I know: *book* and *worm*.
- To expand the number of words they can identify automatically, called their **sight vocabulary**  
example: Oh, I know that word – *the*!

### **To develop comprehension, children need to develop:**

- **Background knowledge** about many topics  
example: This book is about zoos – that's where lots of animals live.
- Extensive **oral and print vocabularies**  
example: Look at my trucks – I have a tractor, and a fire engine, and a bulldozer.
- Understandings about **how the English language works**  
example: We say she *went* home, not she *goed* home.
- Understandings about **how print works**  
example: reading goes from left to right

- Knowledge of **various kinds of texts**  
example: I bet they live happily ever after.
- **Various purposes for reading**  
example: I want to know what ladybugs eat.
- **Strategies for constructing meaning** from text, and for problem solving when meaning breaks down  
example: This isn't making sense. Let me go back and reread it.

### **To develop fluency, children need to:**

- Develop a high level of **accuracy** in word recognition
- Maintain a **rate** of reading brisk enough to facilitate comprehension
- Use **phrasing and expression** so that oral reading sounds like speech
- Transform deliberate strategies for word recognition and comprehension into **automatic skills**

But if reading isn't pleasurable or fulfilling, children won't choose to read, and they won't get the practice they need to become fluent readers.

Therefore, **reading also means developing and maintaining the motivation to read.** Reading is an active process of constructing meaning- the key word here is active.

### **To develop and maintain the motivation to read, children need to:**

- Appreciate the **pleasures** of reading
- View reading as a **social** act, to be shared with others
- See reading as an opportunity to explore their **interests**
- Read widely for a variety of **purposes**, from enjoyment to gathering information
- Become comfortable with a variety of different written forms and **genres**

So...what is reading?

**Reading is the motivated and fluent coordination of word recognition and comprehension.**

Quite an achievement for a six year old!

(Leipzig, 2001)



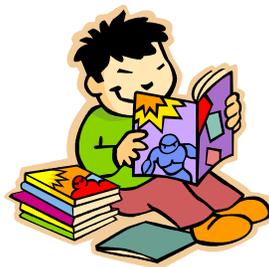
### 1a.0.3 What are Reading Procedures?

“The ultimate aim of any reading programme is to produce confident, competent and independent readers. The strategic use of reading procedures ensures this as it provides a strong foundation for a comprehensive reading program. Each reading procedure involves varying degrees of responsibility for both the teacher and student. Using a selective range of reading procedures ensures that explicit instruction and guidance, when needed, is balanced with regular opportunities for the independent application of skills and strategies.”

Overview of Reading Procedures				
	<b>Reading to Students</b>	<b>Modelled Reading</b>	<b>Language Experience</b>	<b>Shared Reading</b>
<b>Definition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading a text aloud to students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrating reading behaviours and verbalising the cognitive processes involved with those behaviours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To use a shared experience as a basis for jointly creating a text that is then used for further reading</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A teacher-managed blend of modelling, choral reading and focused discussion</li> </ul>
<b>Key Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary purpose is to share enjoyment of reading</li> <li>Reading is uninterrupted</li> <li>Sessions span 10 to 15 minutes daily</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear ‘think aloud’ statements</li> <li>Singular or limited focus</li> <li>Multiple demonstrations</li> <li>Brief sessions from 5 to 10 minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on a Shared Experience</li> <li>Text created as a result of the experience</li> <li>Use students’ language when creating the text</li> <li>Use the created text for further reading activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short sessions from 10 to 20 minutes</li> <li>Singular or limited focus</li> <li>Text visible and accessible to all</li> <li>Differentiated activities</li> <li>Multiple readings of the text</li> </ul>
	<b>Guided Reading</b>	<b>Book Discussion Groups</b>	<b>Independent Reading</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher scaffolds and supports a group of students as they read a common text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small group of students who meet to read and discuss a text they have selected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students select texts to read by themselves</li> </ul>	
<b>Key Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly defined purpose</li> <li>A group of students with identified common need</li> <li>Most reading done silently</li> <li>A pattern of asking guiding questions, reading, discussing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups are temporary</li> <li>Students facilitate discussion</li> <li>Students select texts</li> <li>Regular meeting time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students select texts</li> <li>Uninterrupted time span</li> </ul>	

Figure 1.3 Overview of Reading Procedure

(Annandale, Bindon, Handley, Johnston, Lockett, & Lynch, 2008, pp. 5, 7)



## 1a.2 Questions and Comments

*Discuss answers to these questions with your group:*

1. What information, if anything, did you learn from the Wikipedia definition of reading?

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2. Name 4 facets of the (multifaceted) reading process from the Leipzig article.

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3. Can you read the Jabberwocky poem aloud? Do you have any idea what the words mean?

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4. What is involved in 'reading in its fullest sense'?

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5. What do children need to learn in order to develop word recognition?

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6. What do children need in order to develop and maintain the motivation to read?

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7. Which of the Reading Procedures listed do you use in your classroom? Why?

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## Session 1b “Motivation – Why Read?”

### 1b.0 Why Read?

If children do not know the answer to *this* question, they will not be bothered to learn to read because – as it says in the ‘What is Reading?’ article by Leipzig – it is not an easy task.

First Steps: Second Edition Linking Assessment, Teaching and Learning Book

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reading Attitude Questionnaire**

*Place a cross on the line that shows how you feel about reading.*

1 Do you like to read books at home?  
Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

1. 2 Do you like to get books for presents?  
Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

2. 3 Do you like someone reading books to you?  
Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

3. 4 Do you like to read in free time at school?  
Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

5 Do you like to read different kinds of books?  
Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

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Included here is a questionnaire for children, taken from the ‘First Steps – Reading Map of Development’, designed to discover their attitude to reading.

*Read the questionnaire and*

Consider the reactions you might expect from your students at school.

Consider what your reaction would have been when you were a child.

Answer the questionnaire below about your own present attitude to reading in English.

### 1b.1 Reading Attitude Questionnaire

*Put a cross on the line that shows how you feel about reading.*

1. Do you like to read books in English at home?

Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

1a. Do you like to read books in another language at home?

Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

2. Do you like to read newspapers, magazines or other printed English materials at home?

Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

3. Do you like to read the news and other information in English on your computer?

Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

4. Do your students see you reading and/or hear you talking about enjoying reading?

Yes, a lot  \_\_\_\_\_  No, not at all

*Read this excerpt from an article by Christopher Fernandez from the website “Free Malaysia Today”.*

### 1b.3 “Why read?” by Christopher Fernandez

August 13, 2011



The reading habit helps develop multiple skills and to gain useful knowledge besides putting readers on the fast track to enlightenment and awareness.

It is terribly disappointing to often read in the media that Malaysia is hardly considered as a reading society.

The fact that Malaysians of all walks of life prefer to spend their leisure time on other activities while not allocating sufficient time to read is a definite setback towards building a more enlightened and progressive nation.

Why read? Reading is an avenue by which we accumulate knowledge to enrich and better our lives and the lives of

others. Every great nation was built using the medium of reading as a pillar or building block to become a society transformed to face challenges.

Reading is a building block of success and its importance cannot be overstated nor underestimated. It remains for us to be avid readers to ensure we know of our world and the way we get to discover our universe is through the medium of reading.

Furthermore, there is something ecstatic and enchanting about reading. And it is often a delight to savour what is available to read today. Children of today especially, who will be the leaders of tomorrow, should constantly strive to fill their minds with wisdom, knowledge and an insightful understanding of life by reading.

Much can be said of the world of reading and those who write for us. And whatever the language we choose to read, let it always be a fruitful venture for us. However, over the last few decades, the growing importance of the English language has caused it to become the medium of communication worldwide. While the English language is the foremost language today, do not forsake our mother tongue. It is important for a healthy balance to be drawn between our mother tongue and English. The English language should be used, however, to help us ascend the steep hill of global communication or what has become known now as our borderless world. (...)

Perhaps now Malaysians will rise up not only to take on the challenge of reading more but also of delving into the arena of writing, and hopefully, a local writer will be able to come up with the much-awaited Great Malaysian Novel that can rank alongside the great books of the world.

This should certainly serve as an inspiration for others to carve a niche for themselves in the literary world for posterity to savour. It all begins, however, with teaching ourselves how to read and write.

In other words, it might be good for most of us Malaysians to go back to the two basic Rs – Reading & Writing. From then on, the world is opened up to us to savour and enjoy the world of reading and writing. Happy Reading Malaysia!

*Christopher Fernandez has been teaching and writing throughout Asia since 1984.*

<http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/2011/08/13/why-read/>

**Enjoying and sharing books**

Experience shows that children benefit hugely by exposure to books from an early age.

Right from the start, lots of opportunities should be provided for children to engage with books that fire their imagination and interest. They should be encouraged to choose and peruse books freely as well as sharing them when read by an adult.

Enjoying and sharing books leads to children seeing them as a source of pleasure and interest and motivates them to value reading.

(Department for children, schools and families, 2008, p. 4)

**1b.2 Motivating Children to Read - discussion**

Everybody loves a story, and children especially are naturally curious about the world around them. Naturally, then, children are eager to learn to read, aren't they?

*Discuss:*

What factors can cause a child to have poor motivation to learn to read (at all and/or in English)?

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....

*Share your ideas with others in your group. Add factors others mentioned.*

- 4 .....
- 5 .....
- 6 .....

*Discuss what could be done about these problems. Think of a solution for each.*

**Possible Solutions:**

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....
- 5 .....
- 6 .....

*Select a spokesperson for your group to report back your group's ideas and suggestions.*

*Note any problem areas that your group may not be able to see a solution for; maybe other groups will have a solution.*

## **Bibliography**

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